

Likely it is, too, that in the sale of some of these pictures he was disappointed and did not succeed in getting a purchaser for them. This is doubtless one failing in that category, and, never having been sold, drifted eventually into the garret of the Salem house.

It is said that he painted such pictures with great rapidity, and at different times early in his career, supporting himself almost entirely by their sales. Few there are who know all there is yet to be known in the life of that remarkable man, and the making of these pictures is a bit of it. In fact there is a whole lot of Audubonian history that the world is not, up to this time, in possession of, that later on may possibly appear

BIRDS SEEN ON THE OTONABEE RIVER, CANADA, IN AUGUST.

BY FRANK N. SHANKLAND.

Although home may be the best place in the world for a person to spend the greater part of the year, it is a very poor place to spend a vacation, for when vacation time comes, it is nearly always desirable to seek fresh fields, where life has a different flavor. Furthermore, if one is to derive the greatest possible benefit from a vacation trip, he should by all means have some definite object in view when he sets out. If he has a fad or hobby, he should plan to give it much of his time during vacation. Happy indeed is he who has a hobby which will take him into the wilds of Nature.

Owing to the fact that ornithology has always been the author's favorite recreation and pastime, he usually arranges to spend his vacation in places where birds are abundant, and where there is a possibility of making the acquaintance of some species not found near his home in northern Ohio. One of the pleasantest of all the vacation trips that I have ever taken, was one to the Otonabee River in eastern Canada during the summer of 1907. The objects of the trip were two-

fold. In the first place, I wished to visit some young men of my acquaintance who were in camp on that river at that time, and in the second place, I figured that I would be able to see and study many strange birds while there, and thus take a new hold on ornithology. It was an easy matter to make the necessary arrangements for the trip, and on the evening of July 31, I found myself comfortably installed in a Grand Trunk R. R. passenger coach on the way from Toronto to Peterboro.

While traveling by rail through a strange country, one can often learn a great many interesting things, not only about its general features, but also about its fauna and flora. During my ride from Toronto to Peterboro I kept this fact in mind and maintained a sharp lookout for birds, trees, animals, and unique features of the landscape. It goes without saying that I was well repaid for my efforts.

While passing along the north shore of Lake Ontario, one sees but little in the way of interesting scenery, save occasional glimpses of the lake and of dusky evergreen forests. After passing Port Hope and plunging into the interior, however, one finds a wild, picturesque and hilly country, that is very pleasing to see. Here the frequent appearance of log cabins and slab-houses reminds the traveler that he is in a new country, and one that has but recently been wrested from its primeval inhabitants. Another peculiarity about the farming districts of this country and one that immediately appeals to the eye of the observer, is the abundance of "stump fences." No doubt the pioneers of the country had considerable difficulty in disposing of these huge stumps, and owing to the scarcity of fence material, they conceived the idea of dragging them into rows and making rude, impromptu fences of them. In this way they killed two birds with one stone. As a matter of fact, however, these fences have always been considerable of a nuisance by reason of their furnishing a ready and safe hiding place for the woodchucks, skunks, weasles, and other destructive wild animals.

The farms that were passed by that afternoon were nearly all picturesque and attractive, and it was a genuine satisfaction to gaze upon the steep grassy hillside pastures, where sheep and cattle were grazing in dreamy contentment. In the forests through which the train threaded its way, were to be seen many varieties of strange trees, such as the white birch, the spruce, the cedar, the tamarack, and occasionally a tall, dusky pine.

In the meantime, I had been maintaining a sharp lookout for birds while thus riding along, and although a solitary Bittern, that rose from a marshy river bottom, was the only stranger that I noted, nevertheless I had the satisfaction of recording a number of very interesting species with which I was already familiar. While passing along the north shore of Lake Ontario, we saw numerous Herring Gulls, some wheeling about over the water in search of food; others resting upon piles and driftwood at considerable distances from the shore. As we neared Oak Point, we noticed that Bank Swallows were very plentiful, and a little further on we passed the sand bank in which a colony of these birds nested. Near Port Hope, Bobolinks were still abundant, although elsewhere in that territory but few of them were to be seen. Occasionally as we sped along, a Sparrow Hawk would rise from its perch on the telegraph wires and fly swiftly away across the fields toward the distant forests. Meadowlarks were very abundant in this territory, and flock after flock of them rose and flew swiftly away as our train passed them by.

But of all the land birds that we noted, none were as abundant or as bold as the Crows. There seemed to be Crows everywhere — in the woods, near the rivers, in the fields and on the shores of the lake. During that afternoon ride I counted hundreds of them, and was convinced that they were at least five times as abundant in that territory as they are in northern Ohio. Scarecrows are also abundant, but apparently ineffective. The appearance of Crows in such numbers in this territory is undoubtedly due, partly to the abundance of food in

the sparsely settled rural districts, and partly to the numerous dense forests thereabouts, which afford ideal nesting-places.

As we made our way slowly up the steep grade from Millbrook to Peterboro we saw other interesting birds. A pair of Black-billed Cuckoos flew leisurely away as we passed by a clump of wild cherry trees near the tracks, and after the train had pulled into the station at Peterboro, we were greeted by the welcome and familiar calls of Nighthawks and Purple Martins.

At nine o'clock on the following morning I found myself comfortably seated in the bow of the pretty little steamer Otonabee, which was lying at the wharf in Peterboro, in readiness for a start down the river. A few minutes later we were off for a twenty-mile ride down the picturesque Otonabee River to Rice Lake.

For a nature lover there is always a peculiar fascination about riding on a strange river, for it gives him an opportunity to study nature from a very advantageous position. There are surprises in store for him at every bend of the stream; new scenery and new landscapes are continually greeting his eye; now a picturesque little camp in some woodland clearing or sheltered hillside come into view and remind him of his own experiences and adventures while camping out in the wilderness; now a large black bass, leaping out of the water with a splash, makes him long for an opportunity to try his luck at angling; now his attention is attracted by a strange waterfowl, flying up from the reeds at the water's edge and flapping heavily off up-stream; now a family of muskrats, disturbed at their feeding, swim smartly off up some gully or dive out of sight with a splash; presently the boat rounds a rocky promontory and some strange animal, apparently a fox, is seen scudding up the adjacent hillside to the shelter of the woods. In a word, riding along a strange river in a boat is like examining a series of interesting pictures. While taking such a ride, however, one has the added advantage of being able to breath the cool, refreshing river air, enjoy the glory of the summer skies and see the interesting sights at first hand.

The Otonabee River has its source in the Stony Lake region north of Peterboro; it flows in a southerly direction and empties into Rice Lake—a beautiful little sheet of water lying about twenty miles north of Lake Ontario. Thanks to a number of well-built locks, it is now navigable for nearly its entire course and the chances are that it will some day become an important commercial waterway. The Indian word “otonabee” means tortuous, and it is peculiarly appropriate as a name for this river, since the Otonabee is one of the most winding and tortuous streams in that region, and in traversing a single mile of its course, one often faces every point of the compass. The waters of this river are deep, black and sluggish, and they teem with numerous species of fish and reptiles. Its margins are bordered by numerous swamps and marshes, many of which are over a quarter of a mile wide. Among the sedges and reeds of these marshes numerous species of waterfowl build their nests and rear their young, undisturbed by hunters or specimen collectors. Here also, thousands of muskrats, dozens of minks, and a few otters still make their homes, in spite of the encroachments of civilization. The fact is, that these impenetrable swamps and marshes have enabled the native birds and animals of this region to escape the destruction that almost invariably accompanies the invasion of man.

While comfortably installed in the bow of the little steamer, as it ploughed its way swiftly down the river, I maintained a sharp lookout for the birds, and was rewarded by seeing many interesting species. Of the river-haunting birds, the Belted Kingfishers were the most abundant and we flushed them from nearly every overhanging dead tree from Peterboro to the lake. At the approach of our boat, they would sound their defiant rattles and fly rapidly off down the river, their blue backs, rufous belts and white under parts showing off to good advantage in the bright morning sunlight. These birds seemed to possess to a noticeable extent the wild untamed spirit of this picturesque northern river, and their every movement expressed freedom, happiness and love of their chosen

haunts. Occasionally one of them would hover over a certain point in the water like a Sparrow Hawk, and then dive down with a splash, to appear a moment later with some unlucky minnow in its bill. I also noticed that these Canadian Kingfishers are persistent law-breakers, since they were known to catch dozens of fish less than ten inches long, this being in violation of the Dominion statutes. Nesting holes of this species were also to be seen at intervals along the river. As we passed by one long sandbank, about ten feet high, we noticed a number of smooth round holes, about five inches in diameter, that had undoubtedly been occupied by Kingfishers earlier in the summer. At the time we went down the river, however, they were apparently deserted, although possibly many of the young birds that had been reared in them, were hiding along the banks of the river at that very moment.

But by far the most conspicuous birds that we saw while on the river, were the Great Blue Herons. In northeastern Ohio, this species occurs only as a rare migrant, but on the Otonabee River it is abundant, and in less than two hours I had counted forty-three individuals. Their immense size and peculiar habits made them objects of interest to everyone who saw them, whether interested in birds or not. Some of them were standing motionless in the shallow water at the edges of the river, watching for fish and reptiles; others were flapping heavily about over the river with their long legs stretched out behind them like rudders, and with their long necks bent double like a letter "S"; still others were perched in grotesque attitudes among the topmost limbs of the tall trees that grow on the banks of the river. While attempting to alight on a dead limb in the top of a tall tree, one heron lost its balance and came near falling. The clumsy bird soon regained its equilibrium, but its efforts to regain the coveted perch were grotesque and comical in the extreme. After much awkward flapping of wings and craning of neck, however, the ungainly bird finally succeeded in securing a firm foothold on the dead limb, much to the relief of us spectators. As we passed by a strip of

marsh some distance further down the river, a heron flew up from the water with a medium-sized snake writhing and twisting in its bill. Upon speaking to one of the members of the boat's crew about this incident, I was informed that the herons were fond of snakes, and that it was no unusual sight to see them carrying these reptiles away in their bills:

I afterward learned that these herons were accustomed to breed in a heronry, located in the midst of one of the most inaccessible swamps in that vicinity, and that more than two hundred nests have been seen there in a single season. They are rigidly protected by the Dominion laws, and collectors are not even allowed to procure eggs for their collections.

Another interesting species of waterfowl, of which we saw a few individuals while riding down the river, was the Bittern. Although not nearly as abundant as its greater congener, the Great Blue Heron, nevertheless this species was fairly common on portions of the river, and in the extensive swamps located about a mile north of Rice Lake. Not having had the pleasure of seeing a Bittern, except in museums, prior to that Canadian trip, I was somewhat puzzled when, as we approached a long stretch of marshy territory, a large ochraceous-brown bird flew up from a clump of cat-tails and made off down the river. The bird's flight, although heavy and flapping, was swift, and in less than half a minute it had disappeared around a bend in the river.

Two days later, while paddling about in that same locality, I had the pleasure of seeing four adult Bitterns and several young ones, and also of hearing the strange, unearthly calls of these shy denizens of the marshes. After hearing these calls, one appreciates the appropriateness of the nickname "thunderpump" applied to this species by the fishermen.

After we had traversed about one-half the distance from Peterboro to Rice Lake, we entered a long stretch of wild, marshy territory, where the river was deep and sluggish, and where tributary creeks and brooks emptied into the main channel at frequent intervals. Here the river proper was

bounded on either side by swamps and marshes, some of which were nearly half a mile wide. These swamps and marshes are a favorite haunt of many species of wild ducks, and as we proceeded on our way, we saw flocks of Mallards, Black Ducks and Wood Ducks flying about over the water or resting upon its surface. Once, as the little steamer rounded a sharp curve on the river, a large flock of "Black Sawbills" (Hooded Mergansers) rose from the water with a splash, and flew swiftly off down stream.

The sight of a flock of wild ducks always appeals very forcibly to a nature lover or an ornithologist, no matter whether he be gazing from an office window, or looking out from the prow of a canoe in the midst of some wilderness marsh. The fact is that all wild ducks are imbued with the wild, untamable spirit of the primeval wilderness of four hundred years ago, and their wary, furtive habits, their characteristic rapid flight, and their wild picturesque haunts all interest us and take us back to the good old colonial days when North America used to teem with them. Fortunately for ducks and duck students, the numerous Canadian marshes and rivers still afford safe breeding places for many species, and as I sat there in the prow of the little steamer watching, as flock after flock of them rose from the water and winged their way swiftly across the marshes, I was thankful indeed that they were so abundant, and so well protected in these, their summer breeding-places.

Of the land birds that we saw while riding down the river, the swallows were the most numerous, four different species being noted. Three of these, the Barn Swallow, the Bank Swallow and the Purple Martin were old acquaintances of mine; but the fourth, the Tree Swallow, was practically a stranger. In northeastern Ohio, these birds are only occasionally noted during the migrations, but along the Otonabee they were abundant, and could be distinguished from the other species by the steel-blue coloration of their backs and the pure white of their under parts. Their flight, however, closely re-

sembled that of the other species of swallows, and I would never have suspected them of being strangers at the distance they kept, had not my attention been called to them by one of the passengers. While passing through a woody marsh at some distance further down the river, the same passenger pointed out a number of small round holes in dead limbs and tree trunks, that he said had undoubtedly contained fresh Tree Swallow's nests earlier in the season, for unlike their congeners, these birds are accustomed to build their nests in holes in stumps, cavities of dead trees and similar places, after the manner of Bluebirds and English Sparrows.

While riding down the river, I also watched for Cliff Swallows and Rough-winged Swallows, but both of these species were conspicuous by their absence, and it is probable that neither of them ever penetrates so far north.

In the meantime, the little steamer had been making its way rapidly down the river, and at eleven o'clock we rounded the last curve and steamed out into the sparkling greenish-blue waters of Rice Lake. This beautiful little sheet of water is situated about twenty miles north of Lake Ontario and is fed by the Otonabee River and several lesser streams. It is approximately twelve miles long and two miles wide and is surrounded on all sides by gently sloping hillsides, some of which are forest clad, while others are covered with prosperous looking farms. A branch of the Grand Trunk Railroad once ran across the lake from Harwood to a point near the mouth of the Otonabee, but unfortunately a long section of the track was washed away by the high water soon after the road was completed, and this disaster so discouraged the operators of the line that they abandoned it entirely. At the present time a long embankment of rocks and earth, extending nearly a mile out into the lake from Harwood is the only remaining monument of the ill-starred project.

Another interesting fact about Rice Lake is that the Mississauga Indians still dwell in some numbers in the vicinity of it. These Indians make their living by hunting ducks, geese,

and waterfowl during the open season, by trapping fur-bearing animals in the winter and by fishing, acting as guides and doing farm work during the spring and summer. The squaws are often seen gathering the wild black rice that grows in great abundance in the marshes on the shores of the lake, and on account of which the name, "Rice Lake," was given to it.

As has already been suggested, one of the principle reasons why I decided to spend my vacation on the Otonabee River was because three young men of my acquaintance were enjoying a month's outing on its banks and had invited me to make their camp my vacation headquarters. Upon reaching Gore's Landing, therefore, I immediately rented a birch bark canoe, and after securing some information from the hotel keeper, paddled back across the lake and up the river to a point about a mile distant from the mouth. Here I found my three friends cozily and comfortably established in a picturesque little wooden hut, located on a gentle slope of land on the east side of the river. This hut was built in a little clearing bounded on three sides by thick woods, and on the fourth by the river. It was an ideal place for a camp, and I was overjoyed at the prospect of spending a week amid such delightful and picturesque surroundings, and with such good prospects for studying many different species of interesting birds and animals.

One of my hosts was a medical student and amateur photographer; another was an instructor in German in an eastern college, and the third was a young lawyer. All three were enthusiastic lovers of nature and out-of-door life and all were agreed that the Otonabee River and the adjacent country constituted an ideal camping-place. Their cordiality and hospitality made me feel perfectly at home from the start, and by the time dinner was over I had learned from them many interesting facts about the river, the lake, the surrounding country and the fauna and flora of that region.

That evening, after we had finished our supper and washed the dishes, we all repaired to the front porch of the camp to

watch the sunset and enjoy the wild beauty of the surrounding landscape. The scene that lay before us was typical of the Canadian wilderness. The deep, black waters of the Otonabee were spread out before us like a vast mirror, reflecting perfectly the forest-clad slope across the river, the sun, slowly sinking among the distant wooded hills, was painting the few scattered clouds with exquisite shades of red, purple and roseate; a silence, deep, impressive and soothing, pervaded the wilderness. Once a Great Blue Heron came flying slowly down the river, and momentarily broke the silence with its heavy flappings, and once a large muskrat swam down the river past our camp, but at sight of us it dove out of sight with a splash. As darkness began to settle down over the river a large bullfrog began to twang away from the marsh in a superlatively deep basso voice; not long after many other frogs added their notes to the stentorian chorus, and the effect was novel and pleasing indeed. Just as the moon was rising above the tops of the spruce trees in the rear of our camp, some large bird, probably an owl, flew noiselessly past us, and after crossing the river, disappeared in the forests beyond. All such sights and sounds have a peculiar charm for a lover of the wild things and they help to stimulate his interest in the study of the different creatures and natural wonders about him.

But camping on the banks of the Otonabee is not without its drawbacks, and during the course of that first evening I discovered that one of the greatest of them was the abundance of mosquitoes. These persistent little nuisances fairly swarmed all along the river and in the adjacent marshes. They were so bothersome that the campers along the river were compelled to remain closely indoors during the evening and to protect their porches and windows from invasion by means of wire netting. Our porch had been rendered almost mosquito-proof by having been completely enclosed in a set of screen doors and screens. Even then a few tormentors were always on hand to bother us, although we did not let them prevent

our enjoying the long, pleasant evenings together. Whenever one of us had occasion to venture outside the friendly protection of the wire netting after sunset, he invariably wore a mosquito-proof cage on his head and thick gloves on his hands. No wonder that we often bemoaned the fact that there were no nocturnal flycatchers to prey upon these insects and keep them within bounds.

That evening we had the pleasure of a call from an old back-woods-man, who lived in a log hut across the river. My companions had made his acquaintance some days before, when he had stopped to show them a strange bird that he had killed, and which proved to be a Least Bittern. Our visitor was about fifty-five years of age, and had spent the greater part of his life near the Otonabee River and Rice Lake. In fact, the campers and tourists had learned to consider him as much a part of that locality as the hills, forests and other natural features of the place. He lived by hunting, fishing, trapping, river-driving and wood-chopping, and it was rumored that he had accumulated a modest fortune in real estate and money. He was a confirmed back-woods-man, however, and had no taste for ordinary civilized life or its customs. Although, as a rule, he was a man of very few words, nevertheless, as the evening wore on, he became quite talkative and recounted to us quite a number of his adventures and experiences in the wilderness.

His narratives were graphic and interesting, and he was very careful not to exaggerate. Among other things, he told us that during one winter, in the early seventies, he had succeeded in trapping seven hundred muskrats, twenty-eight minks, forty-two martens, four otters and two beavers, besides a number of other fur-bearers. He also advised us that during one summer he had shipped four hundred dollars worth of bass, trout and muscullonge of his own catching, to the Toronto markets.

In answer to an inquiry from me as to the abundance of the wild ducks in that locality, the old traper made the following statement:

“Although the wild ducks are not nearly as abundant now as they were fifty years ago, they are still quite plentiful in the river marshes in summer, and all along the river and Rice Lake during the spring and fall migrating seasons. In fact, during the fall season, they often fairly swarm all along the river and on the lake, where flocks containing many thousands of individuals are often seen.

“The largest single company of ducks that I ever recorded was an immense flock seen on Rice Lake on Sept. 29, 1888. Prior to that date, a cold north wind had been blowing for two days, and as a result of it, waterfowl of many different species were winging their way southward. That morning I took my shotgun and canoe and paddled down to Rice Lake to see if anything of interest were transpiring in its vicinity. When I reached the mouth of the river and gazed out across the lake, a strangely interesting sight met my gaze. Above the middle portion of it the air was fairly alive with wild ducks of many different species. As far as the eye could see, they were circling through the air or hovering over the water. Some minutes later they began to settle down at a distance of half a mile from the northern shore, and after nearly all had alighted, they made the lake look black over an area more than a mile long and 100 feet wide. I sat still in my canoe watching them with eager eyes for a long time, until finally I noticed that they were becoming restless. Then, upon looking about to find the cause of their uneasiness, I saw a party of Mississauga Indians approaching them from the east in canoes. Soon after, the Indians opened fire upon the ducks, thereby causing the entire company to rise from the water and commence circling about over the lake again. Up till that time I had contented myself with sitting idly in the canoe enjoying the scene, but when I saw the ducks dropping into the lake by the dozens before the effective aim of the redskins, I paddled out within range and opened fire on my own account. It goes without saying that I secured all the ducks I wanted, and when ten o'clock came there were seventy-two dead birds in the canoe.

There were Mallards, Lesser Scaup Ducks, Redheads, Goldeneyes, Red-breasted Mergansers, Hooded Mergansers, Baldpates, Canvasbacks, Teal, and one White-winged Scoter. Never since then have I seen as many wild ducks in a single day."

After the old hermit had completed this narrative, he bade us farewell and set out for home. We watched him until he had paddled across the river, then we locked the doors and retired for the night, for it was after ten o'clock, and we had planned to start on a fishing trip at four the following morning.

Our sleep was not destined to be without interruption, however, and before morning came we were awakened several times by various prowlers. At about eleven o'clock I was aroused by the loud hooting of a Great Horned Owl, which seemed to issue from the tall trees at the rear of our camp. The bird continued to hoot from time to time for a period of about twenty minutes, after which it must have flown away, for the sounds ceased. Although I disliked to have my sleep broken, I must confess that I rather enjoyed this weird serenade, for there was something so wild and primeval about it that it appealed strongly to the romantic fibers of my makeup. These owls are still fairly plentiful near the Otonabee and are apparently bolder and more rapacious than their northern Ohio cousins.

Once during the night we were startled by hearing the melancholy, tremulous calls of a Screech Owl from some point close at hand. The calls were so clear and distinct that we concluded that the bird was sitting upon the roof of our hut. During the earlier watches of the night we also heard a Whippoorwill emitting its lonesome, mournful calls. By eleven o'clock, however, it had either desisted or retreated to some more remote rendezvous.

Along towards morning some four-footed prowler visited our camp. We heard it scratching about in our garbage pile and near our back door for some little time. It might have

been a raccoon or opossum, or perhaps some straggling lynx that had taken a fancy to our discarded meat scraps and fish heads. We made no attempt to molest it, and it finally went away.

At half-past four the following morning we arose, ate a light luncheon of crackers and cheese to tide us over until breakfast time, and then set out on a short fishing trip down the river. The morning was one of those rare and beautiful ones that fill the body with vigor and magnetism and render all the senses keen and alert. Above the hills in the east the first glow of dawn was becoming visible; among the forest trees, thrushes, warblers, and sparrows were singing their matin songs; in the waters of the river hundreds of fish were seeking their breakfasts, and at intervals one of them would leap out of the water to snatch some passing insect and fall back into the water again with a splash. As we rowed along, Kingfishers greeted us from time to time with their rattling calls and as we passed by strips of sandy beach, Spotted Sandpipers uttered their musical "weeet weeet" calls and flew away down stream, keeping so close to the water that they seemed to almost touch it. A mist hung over the river and marshes, and for that reason we failed to notice a flock of Black Ducks until we were almost upon them, when they arose from the water with a great splashing of wings and made their way quickly out of sight down the river. There is a pleasure in being amid such scenes and surroundings that cannot be adequately described. It is a deep, subtle, and healthful joy that seems to appeal to all the senses at the same time. You who are lovers of nature and the out-of-door life will understand and appreciate it, for you have undoubtedly experienced the same joy many times while sojourning in the wilderness.

After we had reached a propitious looking stretch of deep water, my companions ceased rowing, dropped the drags overboard and prepared to do some angling. I followed their example, and soon all four of us were intently watching our

floats for the first signs of a catch. It must be confessed, however, that my attention was not so taken up by my fishing that I did not find plenty of time to observe the interesting species of birds that were to be seen in that vicinity.

While sitting thus in our canoes waiting for the fish to "bite," we noticed a strange bird swimming across the river at a point about fifty yards below us. It bore some resemblance to a small duck, but its bill was shorter, stouter and not so flat as a duck's, and its plumage was somewhat different from that of any duck we had ever seen. The bird swam steadily across the river on a "bee line" until it was within ten feet of a clump of cat-tails on the west bank; then it disappeared as if by magic and we saw nothing more of it for some little time. The suddenness and manner of the bird's disappearance at once convinced us that it was a grebe or diver and we therefore remained motionless in our boats, hoping to see it reappear in that vicinity. It was fully two minutes, however, before the little feathered amphibian emerged from the water, and when it did so, it was many yards distant from the point where it had disappeared, and was swimming rapidly away down the river. We knew that it would be madness to attempt pursuit, so we resumed our fishing. A few minutes later another grebe came swimming down the river towards us. As soon as this bird caught sight of our boats, however, it also dove, but instead of sinking gradually out of sight as the first one had done, it sprang up three or four feet into the air, as if to get a good start, and then plunged straight down into the water with a splash. This was the last we saw of this second diver. Both birds were Pied-billed Grebes, and we were informed by the old hermit that this species is of common occurrence in summer all along the marshy portion of the Otonabee. During my stay in camp I saw several more of these interesting little divers; in fact a pair of them used to appear on the river in front of our hut every morning just at sunrise.

Two other species of grebes are of quite common occurrence near the Otonabee River and the adjacent marshes at the

proper seasons of the year. The first of these, the Horned Grebe, is of about the same size as a Pied-billed Grebe, but may readily be distinguished from the latter species by its prominent "horns" and white throat. This species is not of very common occurrence along the Otonabee, and although we saw two or three birds that we supposed were Horned Grebes, we were unable to positively identify them as such. They are said to breed sparingly in the marshes.

The Holboell's Grebe, a bird of larger size and more striking appearance than the ones already mentioned, appears regularly on the Otonabee River only during the spring and fall migrations, as its breeding-grounds are in the primeval wilderness of the far north. During the fall season, Holboell's Grebes are quite conspicuous birds, being about the size of Mallard ducks, and distinguishable from other waterfowl by their white speculum, and from other grebes by their larger size. They appear on the Otonabee River and Rice Lake at about the same time as the Loons, the Canada Geese, and the Whistling Swans.

In the meantime, one of my companions, more lucky than the rest of us, had succeeded in hooking what appeared to be a good-sized fish, and a moment later he was experiencing some of the delightful difficulties of attempting to play a fish from a light birch bark canoe. The performance was intensely interesting, however, and he finally had the satisfaction of landing a handsome sixteen-inch black bass, although not until it had made a desperate fight for life and freedom. Ten minutes later another of my companions hooked and landed a muscullonge twenty inches long. This is one of the commonest species of fish in these waters, and individuals often weigh more than one hundred pounds. During the next twenty minutes, each of my three friends succeeded in catching at least one fish, and in half an hour after we had commenced fishing, there were five bass and two muscullonge in the bottoms of the canoes.

It was not my lucky day, however, and I failed to even get

a good nibble. After waiting patiently for half an hour, therefore, I took one of the canoes and paddle into the marshes in quest of interesting birds. In this expedition I was more fortunate, and before I had penetrated forty feet into the marsh I descried a pair of strange birds, which proved to be Long-billed Marsh Wrens. They were hopping about among the cat-tails, and when they saw my canoe approaching they commenced scolding so vigorously and loudly that I began to suspect that they had a nest in that vicinity. This theory proved to be correct, for just as I was paddling past a thick clump of cat-tails I caught sight of a roundish mass of dried grass and weed stems, located in the undergrowth at a distance of two feet above the level of the marsh. The nest was shaped like an English Sparrow's, having a roof or dome above, and a round entrance about three-quarters of an inch in diameter in the side facing the river. The eggs, nine in number, resembled House Wren's eggs, except that instead of being reddish-brown, they were of a rich chocolate-brown color. While I was investigating this little home, the parent birds kept scolding away with desperate vigor, and while doing so, they would often hang head downward from the reeds as if overcome by anger and despair. In fact, their actions caused me to feel as if I were some thieving kidnapper, and made me wish to get away from that locality as quickly as possible. Their cries were much louder and harsher than those of a House Wren, and their rattling song which I heard a few minutes later, was not nearly as pleasing as that of the more familiar species.

During the next half hour I saw many more of these wrens as I paddled about through the marsh; in fact, with the exception of the Red-winged Blackbirds they were the most abundant birds in the marsh at that season.

After we had returned from our fishing trip and eaten a hearty breakfast, I set out for a tramp through the woods and swamps back of our camp. I knew that these Canadian forests contained many varieties of interesting trees, most of

which are not found in northern Ohio, and for that reason I maintained as sharp a lookout for the trees as for the birds during my walk.

One of the most interesting varieties of trees that I found was the tamarack, which grew in great abundance all along that portion of the river valley. There was something so pleasing about the delicate pea-green color of the foliage of these trees, and such a picturesqueness in the scraggy shapelessness of their trunks and limbs that I could not help lingering wherever they were to be found. This species has always been a general favorite with tourists and nature students, and it is unfortunate that it is not more generally distributed. Another interesting tree, and one that is still quite plentiful along the banks of the Otonabee, is the white birch, and during that morning walk I counted more than fifty of them. On account of the pure white color of the bark of their trunks and limbs, these trees are very conspicuous objects on the landscape, and a stranger is sure to take notice of them even if he is not at all interested in trees. The bark of these trees is made use of by the canoe makers, although it is not as valuable for their purpose as is the canoe birch.

In the forests proper, the beautiful and symmetrical spruces are the most conspicuous of all the trees, and some of those that I saw that morning were fifty feet high and as round and conical as if they had been turned in a lathe. Red cedars were likewise abundant in the deeper forests. Although these trees are not especially pleasing to the eye, nevertheless they are very valuable for their lumber, which is in great demand at the sawmills for making into shingles. During my walk I also noted the balsam, the pine, the fir, the chestnut, the hemlocks and many others.

From an ornithological point of view, however, my walk was somewhat of a disappointment, for while there were plenty of birds to be seen, they were nearly all of the more familiar species. Among the evergreen trees, Crows and Blue Jays were abundant, their calls making the forests fairly ring

at times; in the tamarack swamps sounded the cheerful songs of Chickadees; from the second growth clearings came the flute-like notes of the Wilson's Thrush; Robins were of common occurrence, thereabouts, many of them being seen skulking along the ground in the depths of the forests. Other species noted were the Cedar Waxwing, the Northern Yellowthroat, the Red-eyed Vireo, the Kingbird, the Flicker, the Red-headed Woodpecker, the Goldfinch and the Sparrow Hawk. I spent about two hours observing these birds and rambling about through the woods, after which I set out for camp.

While on the way back I had the good fortune to meet with one bird that was practically a stranger to me. This bird, which was sitting on a dead branch near my path was about as large as an English Sparrow, and had the cone-shaped bill that is characteristic of the finch family. By dint of keeping a certain dead tree trunk between myself and the bird I succeeded in approaching within twenty feet of it, from which distance I was able to study its plumage without difficulty. Its head and rump were of a bright rosy red color, its belly white, and its breast of a dingy-red hue, streaked and washed with different shades of purple. This data was convincing proof that the stranger was a Purple Finch—a rather uncommon migrant in northeastern Ohio, but a fairly common summer resident near the Otonabee. Once, as I stood watching it, the bird indulged in a low, sweet song that bore some resemblance to that of a Warbling Vireo. After reaching the camp I saw two more of these birds hopping about among the evergreen trees near by, and my companions reported having seen individuals of this species nearly every day since their arrival.